

**Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the matter of)	
)	
Implementation of Section 621(a)(1) of the Cable)	
Communications Policy Act of 1984 as amended)	MB Docket No. 05-311
by the Cable Television Consumer Protection and)	
Competition Act of 1992)	
)	

**COMMENTS OF
The Peoples Channel, Chapel Hill, NC
IN RESPONSE TO THE FURTHER NOTICE
OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING**

The Peoples Channel submits these comments in response to the Further Notice of Proposal Rulemaking, released March 5, 2007, in the above-captioned rulemaking ("Further Notice").

1. The Town Of Chapel Hill is the local franchising authority for Chapel Hill, NC. The Peoples Channel is the nonprofit Community Media Center and Public Access Television Station for Chapel Hill and Orange County, NC. Viewed in an estimated 30,000 households, The Peoples Channel served over 500 nonprofit, community groups and government agencies in 05-06, provided 417 hours of media training to both agencies, community groups, nonprofits, and local citizens and 712 volunteers signed in, averaging 2,136 hours of volunteer time. The Peoples Channel provides the Chapel Hill and Orange County Community with local media,

information, and education facilities on a first come, first serve, First Amendment basis. There is one franchised cable operator within Chapel Hill, NC's jurisdiction. This cable operator, along with the current expiration date of its franchises is: Time Warner Cable, Franchise Expiration 2016.

2. The Peoples Channel and myself as Executive Director, Chad A. Johnston supports and adopts the comments of the Alliance for Community Media, the Alliance for Communications Democracy, the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors, the National League of Cities, the National Association of Counties, and the U.S. Conference of Mayors, filed in response to the Further Notice.

3. We oppose the Further Notice's tentative conclusion (at ¶ 140) that the findings made in the FCC's March 5, 2007, Order in this proceeding should apply to incumbent cable operators, whether at the time of renewal of those operators' current franchises, or thereafter. This proceeding is based on Section 621(a)(1) of the Communications Act, 47 U.S.C. § 541(a)(1), and the rulings adopted in the Order are specifically, and entirely, directed at "facilitat[ing] and expedit[ing] entry of new cable competitors into the market for the delivery of video programming, and accelerat[ing] broadband deployment" (Order at ¶ 1).

4. We disagree with the rulings in the Order, both on the grounds that the FCC lacks the legal authority to adopt them and on the grounds that those rulings are unnecessary to promote competition, violate the Cable Act's goal of ensuring that a cable system is "responsive to the needs and interests of the local

community,” 47 U.S.C. § 521(2), and are in conflict with several other provisions of the Cable Act. But even assuming, for the sake of argument, that the rulings in the Order are valid, they cannot, and should not, be applied to incumbent cable operators. By its terms, the “unreasonable refusal” provisions of Section 621(a)(1) apply to “additional competitive franchise[s],” not to incumbent cable operators. Those operators are by definition already in the market, and their future franchise terms and conditions are governed by the franchise renewal provisions of Section 626 (47 U.S.C. § 546), and not Section 621(a)(1).

5. We strongly endorse the Further Notice’s tentative conclusion (at para. 142) that Section 632(d)(2) (47 U.S.C. § 552(d)(2)) bars the FCC from “preempt[ing] state or local customer service laws that exceed the Commission’s standards,” and from “preventing LFAs and cable operators from agreeing to more stringent [customer service] standards” than the FCC’s.

Respectfully submitted,

Chad A. Johnston – Executive Director

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